

**MINUTES**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**Monday, March 9, 2015**  
**City Hall, Room 210**  
**4:00 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairperson Ald. Mark Steuer, Vice Chairperson Jacqueline Frank, Roger Retzlaff, Susan Ley, Dave Boyce, Jeanine Mead, Dennis Doucette

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kevin Vonck, Wendy Townsend, Naletta Burr, Ald. Nennig, Bill Meindl

The meeting was called to order by Ald. Steuer at 4:00 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA**

- a. Approve February 9, 2015 Minutes

Motion made by R. Retzlaff to approve the February 9, 2015 Minutes, seconded by J. Frank. All in favor. Motion carried.

- b. Modify and adopt agenda

Motion made by Ald. Steuer to move Item 6(a) up to 3(a), seconded by R. Retzlaff. All in favor. Motion carried.

**2. DESIGN REVIEWS**

- a. Review and discuss renovations at 159 N. Broadway

Luke Russell from Tiletown Tobacco appeared at the meeting to discuss putting up a new sign. The size of the sign will remain the same. It will replace the current sign and will not be back lit. No awnings will be installed. The goose neck lights will remain. The "Coming Soon" banners in the windows will be removed once they open. There will be one sign out front and two out back. The signs are black, red, white and gray in color which was relevant to the prohibition era.

The sign will say "Prohibition Spirits & Cigar Lounge." This establishment will be a beer, wine and premium spirits bar. The other sign will say "Prohibition Lounge at Tiletown Tobacco." Luke has met with "On Broadway" regarding the signs.

Motion made by J. Frank to approve the renovations at 159 N. Broadway, seconded by S. Ley. All in favor. Motion carried.

### 3. REPORTS

- a. Naletta Burr of WEDC to discuss historic tax initiatives with respect to historic districts and economic development

Ms. Burr was asked to come to the meeting to explain the changes in state law regarding the 20% historic tax credits. She stated the State Historic Preservation Office and the WEDC work together closely to move projects forward and get the official tax credits awarded. Eventually the Department of Revenue oversees and manages this area.

Ms. Burr has toured four or five buildings on the east side of downtown interested in applying for historic tax credits. Some would qualify and some would not. For a period of time, the pre-1936 tax credit was going to be eligible as long as the building was in the original location. This may no longer apply as there is a proposal to change the historic tax credit to a competitive process.

Because of this, in order for businesses and those places on the east side of downtown to qualify for tax credits, the city should look at creating a commercial historic district in this area. The east side does not currently have one.

To be individually listed on the National Register, you need significant architecture (such as the Hotel Northland and the YMCA building). Ms. Burr does not believe the Schauer & Schumacher buildings would be easily listed as independent. They have nothing significant. However, there is a great collective mass within the east side of downtown to take a look at getting a historic district together of which she would be an advocate. This would be beneficial to potential developers and interested parties. Even private business owners who own properties downtown, and want to do repairs could become eligible for the federal historic tax credit as well as the state historic tax credit.

Ms. Burr Informed the HPC that Mark Buechel is the historic preservation officer for this area. He often tours buildings with her. If a building is on the national register, anything can be done to it – even, unfortunately, tearing it down. However, there are “carrots” if you do the right thing to the building. You get tax credits if you do the right thing. Transferability is a very nice incentive to take a look at being on the national register. Ms. Burr believes Mr. Buechel also sees an ability to get a registered district here.

Ms. Burr stated that the State Historic Preservation Office offers grants to those that have certified local government status. Ms. Burr sees a lot of great things currently happening downtown. She feels that interest will continue to grow. This would be another resource to help with financing and getting the buildings back to their original state.

Right now, on the federal side, you can actually run the tracks parallel. You don't have to have the building on the national register to go after the historic tax credits. However, you are required to identify it as a contributing building. A preliminary application should be

ready to go to qualify eligibility. If it's on a national register or part of a contributing building to a national register, that is a lot easier (Part 1). Part 2 will detail all of the architectural work being done on the building. Part 3 is certification.

The tax credits cannot be claimed until the building is on the national register. If it takes two years to get a district in place, you have a two year wait after you do your project to take advantage of the tax credits. This could impact how they plan on using them, such as buying or selling a building.

Ms. Burr stated that any project that is currently on the national register is eligible for the 20/20 tax credit. The dilemma is that the city has some great projects that are not yet on the national register. In order for them to take advantage of the credit, they need to get on the national register. The building has to be "contributing" to the historic district.

Motion made to open the floor for public discussion and seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Bill Meindl stated that the Associated Bank building was built in 1964 and may now be eligible, architecturally, for historic credits. He asked Ms. Burr's opinion that if the HPC hired a consultant, should the first job be to develop and do the survey work for a downtown historic district. Ms. Burr stated she would definitely put it as a priority. However, between doing an intensive survey vs. getting something on the national district, she would encourage them to get something on the national district.

Ms. Burr suggested having community meetings or one-on-one meetings with property owners in these potential historic districts.

b. Discussion of Raze Ordinance from February 23, 2015 Protection and Welfare Committee meeting (Ald. Steuer; Director Kim Flom)

Ald. Steuer met with Kim Flom to discuss the proposed ordinance. K. Flom believes half the city is 50 years or older. It was suggested that the 30 day demolition hold period apply to the following properties (1) attached list assembled as part of authenticity plan, (2) list the non-downtown local historic properties, (3) all properties that have historic designation as granted by the historic preservation commission.

Other points were as follows:

- Properties in historic districts and on the national register already need to appear before the HPC prior to a demolition, so they should be exempt from this ordinance
- Sheds, garages and other accessory structures are exempt from the hold period unless they are specifically identified in the ordinance or in the historic designation of the property

The intent of the 30 day hold period is to:

1. Take photos of the property for record purposes
2. Share resources with the property owners as related to restoration and/or rehabilitation versus demolition

Ald. Steur stated he will continue to work on this with K. Flom, the law department and anyone else on the HPC who is interested is doing so. Once they are comfortable with the final draft, it can be present to the Protection and Welfare Committee.

R. Retzlaff thinks this whole process is just an administrative matter. All the HPC asks is to be notified when a demolition is to occur. He would like to have a 30 day waiting period on any demolition set to occur in the city unless it's on an emergency basis.

S. Ley feels making a list of properties is unrealistic, as it would be a fluid list.

R. Retzlaff asked that the following language be added to the draft ordinance: "Building Inspection is to notify the Historic Preservation Commission on a weekly basis of any properties on which a raise permit application has been made."

Motion made by R. Retzlaff to adopt the revised ordinance, seconded by D. Boyce. All in favor. Motion carried.

Ald. Steuer will notify the members of the date of the next Protection and Welfare Committee meeting.

- c. Discussion of new position for hire for the HPC (Ald. Steuer; J. Frank; I DeCoste (Human Resources); Director Kim Flom

Ald. Steuer stated five interviews are scheduled on Friday for this position. The job description is Historic Preservation Specialist LTE. This person will be working in the Planning Department. The HPC will be responsible for supervision. It's part time, averaging 20 hours per week and shall not exceed \$7,000.

There will be second interviews scheduled for the final candidates and Ald. Steuer will keep the HPC informed.

- d. Discussion of the "Meet and Greet" event at the Titledown Tap Room on February 12, 2015 (D. Boyce and Commission Members)

Ald. Steuer thanked Dave Boyce for his work on putting this together. D. Doucette stated he would like the HPC to be involved in seminars at the Hotel Northland. Ald. Steuer indicated he paid a bill for \$66.44 for this event and he will get reimbursed from the HPC budget. Ald. Boyce thanked those who helped him and felt it was well received. Perhaps they could partner with other organizations in the future.

4. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

5. **CONTINUING BUSINESS**

- a. Discussion of the HPC Awards program scheduled for May 5 or May 19, 2015 (S. Ley; J. Mead)

J. Mead passed a hand out listing past recipients. The press releases is to be sent out March 23. Suggestions for 2015 nominations include: Platten Place, Watermark, Adams Street Garage, Leonardo da Vinci School, Hoffman House and 401 Broadway, 209 S. Madison Street, the Larsen Home on Oakland Avenue. It was suggested that the Astor Neighborhood Association should be contacted about the awards.

Bill Meindl also suggested the Eisenhower train restoration at the National Railroad Museum as a possible recipient.

## 6. **NEW BUSINESS**

- b. Discussion on a contractor database that has been started by the Brown County Trust for Historic Preservation (BCTHP) and how the HPC may partner on this effort (Ald. Steuer)

Ald. Steuer spoke with people on the Trust committee about creating a contractor database. This will be a work in progress and the HPC's intern could help with the project. There was concern that a list of contractors on the website might have a sense of favoritism and would be inappropriate. Ald. Steuer will check with the law department regarding legalities.

- c. Discussion on a historic preservation symposium/meeting for May 2015 with the HPC, BCHS, BCTHP, De Pere Historical Society, Allouez Historical Society and other Brown County area preservation groups (Ald. Steuer)

Ald. Steuer spoke with Chris Dunbar and also the Brown County Trust. Both expressed interest. This could occur on a Saturday morning. Ald. Steuer will follow up.

Ald. Steuer left to attend another meeting at this time. J. Frank now conducted the meeting.

- d. Preliminary discussion for a planning process for the HPC (J. Frank)

She is working on a simple strategic plan for the HPC. This includes putting together a vision and setting goals for the future. She passed out some questions to guide them in the process. These will be discussed at the next meeting and asked for everyone's input.

- e. Review City Raze/Repair Orders and Demolitions

Motion made and seconded to receive and place on file. All in favor. Motion carried.

- f. Review February building activity report

Motion made and seconded to receive and place on file. All in favor. Motion carried.

7. **OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS**

8. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** April 13, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by D. Doucette, seconded by R. Retzlaff. All in Favor. Motion carried.